

VZCZCXYZ0001
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUL #0861/01 0750839
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 160839Z MAR 06
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 6646
INFO RUEAEP/A/EPA WASHINGTON DC
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC 1379
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC 0047
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0275
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 0362

UNCLAS SEOUL 000861

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

PASS USTR FOR CUTLER, AUGEROT, KI AND R. SMITH
JUSTICE FOR STU CHEMTOB
STATE FOR OES/ETC, OES/ENV, OES/PCI
STATE ALSO FOR EB/TPP/BTA AND EAP/K
EPA FOR OIA
USDOC FOR 4431/ITA/MAC/OPB/EAP/MORGAN
TREASURY FOR IA/ISA/BUCKLEY AND ITT/CHANG
WHITE HOUSE FOR CEQ

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [PGOV](#) [KS](#)

SUBJECT: KOREA NAMES NEW ENVIRONMENT MINISTER AND NEW FAIR
TRADE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

NEW ENVIRONMENT MINISTER: LEE CHI-BEOM

1. (U) On March 15, President Roh nominated Lee Chi-beom, President of Korea's state-run company that promotes recycling (the Korea Environment and Resources Corporation - ENVICO) to be Minister of the Environment. The nominee will replace Lee Jae-yong, who resigned to run in local elections slated for May 31. Lee Chi-beom, aged 52, is a former secretary general of one of Korea's most influential environmental NGOs, the Korea Federation of the Environmental Movement (KFEM). According to one press report, he also worked on the campaign staff of President Roh Moo-hyun.

2. (U) Following is the available biographic information about the nominee.

Name: Lee Chi-beom
Date of Birth: September 25, 1954
Place of Birth: Yeasan County, South Chungchung Province
Education: MA in philosophy from Seoul National University

Experience:

-- October 2003 - March 2006: President, Korean Environment and Resources Corporation (ENVICO), formerly called Korea Resources Recovery and Reutilization Corporation (KORECO)

-- February 2002 - November 2002: Chairman, Koyang Chapter, Korea Federation of the Environmental Movement (KFEM)

-- March 1993 - December 1997: Secretary General, KFEM

-- June 1993 - September 1993: President, Korea Environmental Society Policy Research Institute

-- March 1988 - February 1993: Lecturer at Kwangwoon University, Seoul

¶3. (U) On the same day, President Roh Moo-hyun nominated Kwon Oh-seung Kwon, a leading anti-trust law professor, to be the new Chairman of the Korea Fair Trade Commission (KFTC), replacing Kang Chul-kyu, whose three-year tenure expired last week. Kwon is well-known as an expert on competition law, and is currently a professor of law at Seoul National University and has served as the Chairman of the Competition Policy Advisory Committee for the KFTC since last September. As indicated by Kwon's numerous publications, the new chief trust-buster has experience with a range of competition issues, including anti-trust laws, mergers and acquisitions, and cartels related to Korean chaebols. Kwon has a doctoral degree in law from Seoul National University.

¶4. (SBU) In announcing the appointment, Kim Wan-key, senior presidential secretary for personnel affairs, said "Dr. Kwon has expressed his intention to keep the current tone of fair trade policies unchanged." However, since the government's three-year market reform plan finishes at the end of this year, Kwon will have to establish new policies for Korea's conglomerates. A representative of the Federation of Korean Industries told the Embassy that Kwon may be more moderate about chaebol policy compared to his predecessor, but stricter relevant to rules governing M&A and cartels. Secretary Kim of the Blue House staff said, "Dr. Kwon has

SIPDIS

firm principles concerning chaebol and other policies, but he is realistic and modest in his approach."

¶5. (U) Following is the available biographic information about the nominee.

Name: Kwon Oh-seung
Date of Birth: January 12, 1950
Place of Birth: Ahndong, North Gyeongsang Province
Religion: Christian
Family: Married with two sons

1973 B.A. in Law, Seoul National University
1973 M.A. in Economic Law, Seoul National University
1987 J.D. in Economic Law, Seoul National University

CAREER:

-- 1992-Present: Professor, Antitrust Law and Economic Regulation, Kyonghee University.

-- 1997-1998 and 2001-2003: Member of Competition Policy Advisory Committee, KFTC

-- 2005-Present: Chairman of Competition Policy Advisory Committee, KFTC

-- 1998-1999: Visiting Scholar, East Asian Legal Studies Program, Harvard Law School

-- 1999: Visiting Professor, Mainz University, Germany

-- 2000: Visiting Professor, Waseda University, Japan

-- 2000-Present: President of Competition Law Association

BOOKS:

1987 Regulations on the Corporate Consolidation
1992 Competition Laws
1992 Issues on Civil Law
1992 Special Lectures on Civil Law
1992 Lectures on Fair Trade Law
2002 Economic Laws
2002 Consumer Protection Law

